



**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**SUBJECT: TOXICS STEERING GROUP**

**Number: 09-006**

**Date: September 22, 2000**

**Revised: December 3, 2002**

**Revised: December 12, 2003**

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**ISSUE:**

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) administers chemical contaminant standards developed for the protection of human health, welfare, and the environment. The DEQ endeavors to incorporate the best available science in the development and review of these standards. Human health, welfare, and environmental risk assessment issues encountered in these efforts may have department-wide implications, and any decisions made concerning these issues may have impacts in several programmatic areas. Human health-related issues of particular concern include, but are not limited to, protection of children's health, assessment of cumulative risk, and assessment of the risk associated with exposures to chemical mixtures.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Chemical Mixture:** Any set of multiple chemical substances which may or may not be identifiable, regardless of their sources, that may jointly contribute to toxicity in the exposed population.

**Consensus Recommendation:** The collective opinion that represents the majority of the participants involved in the process.

**Cumulative Risk:** The risk associated with a group of chemicals that are toxic by a similar mode of action across all pathways and routes of exposure.

**Exposure Assessment:** The determination or estimation (qualitative or quantitative) of the magnitude, frequency, duration, and route of exposure. Exposure assessment may consider past, present, and future exposures.

**Hazard Assessment:** The process of determining whether exposure to a chemical or chemical mixture can cause an increase in the incidence of a particular adverse health effect (e.g., cancer, birth defects) and whether the adverse effect is likely to occur in humans or environmental organisms.

**Risk Assessment:** The determination of potential adverse health effects from exposure to chemicals, including both quantitative and qualitative expressions of risk.

**POLICY:**

The purpose of the Toxics Steering Group (TSG) is to provide a forum for discussion of human health risk assessment issues related to exposure to chemical contaminants in environmental media. The TSG will facilitate development of consensus recommendations based on sound science to relevant state department managers and will foster consistency of risk assessment applications within the DEQ and between state agencies, while minimizing duplication of effort on risk assessment issues.

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### **CHARGES:**

- The TSG will monitor and evaluate the United States Environmental Protection Agency's and other federal agencies' efforts in the area of children's health, review the latest scientific literature and general risk assessment issues, and make recommendations relative to DEQ's environmental standards affecting children's health, which incorporate the best available science.
- The TSG will monitor approaches that address concepts of mixtures, multiple media exposures, and cumulative risks, and as the science matures, incorporate these concepts into the regulatory risk assessment process.
- The TSG will provide a forum for consideration of factors used to develop cleanup criteria, screening levels, and other environmental quality criteria or standards for the protection of human health, welfare, and the environment.
- The TSG will provide a forum for review, opinion exchange, and discussion on new and innovative approaches for conducting hazard, exposure, and risk assessments.
- The TSG will provide a mechanism for seeking and receiving outside expert input on human health risk assessment issues and other scientific and technical issues identified by the member state agencies.
- The TSG will provide a mechanism to address other scientific and technical issues, as needed.

### **PROCEDURE:**

The TSG will be under the direction of the DEQ Deputy Director who oversees the Air Quality Division (AQD), the Remediation and Redevelopment Division (RRD), and the Waste and Hazardous Materials Division (WHMD).

#### **TSG Membership**

Members of the TSG shall include all DEQ toxicologists. In addition, other state of Michigan departments (e.g., the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Community Health) may identify toxicologists, epidemiologists, or other appropriate risk assessment technical staff to serve as TSG members.

#### **TSG Chairperson**

A DEQ member shall chair the TSG. The Chairperson will rotate annually among able DEQ members who are at the Senior Toxicologist (Toxicologist 12) level or higher. A Discussion Facilitator may be appointed to direct discussions related to specific issues. Another TSG member may perform the Chairperson's duties if the Chairperson is the Discussion Facilitator for a specific issue. Non-DEQ TSG members can chair TSG subcommittees.

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### Discussion Facilitator(s)

The Discussion Facilitator(s) will be a TSG member. The Discussion Facilitator(s) will generally be the lead staff member(s) for the issue under consideration.

### Outside Experts

The TSG may invite outside experts to participate in discussions on specific technical issues as needed. The experts will have appropriate formal training and professional experience in a scientific field relevant to the issue under discussion. Experts will have no less than a Bachelor's degree in a related field.

### Conduct of TSG Discussions

Issues to be addressed by the TSG must be elevated for discussion by a TSG member, the DEQ Special Projects Coordinator, a DEQ Division Chief, a DEQ Deputy Director, or the DEQ Director to the TSG Chairperson. The TSG will not directly entertain or solicit requests from outside parties to address discussion topics. The TSG may entertain discussion of scientific issues raised by other Michigan departments when those issues are pertinent to the purpose of and charge to the TSG.

The TSG will focus on scientific topics. If a TSG review raises policy-related questions, the TSG will characterize the issue and forward it to the DEQ Deputy Director and the appropriate DEQ Division Chief(s) for management consideration and direction.

### TSG Findings

The TSG members will participate in reaching a consensus position on human health risk assessment and other scientific and technical issues under consideration. The TSG Chairperson will provide to the DEQ Deputy Director overseeing the TSG a written report of TSG findings and such documentation as necessary to support the findings.

### Meeting Summaries

Meeting summaries will be distributed to all TSG members, the DEQ Special Projects Coordinator, the DEQ Division Chiefs, the DEQ Deputy Directors, the Director of the Office of the Great Lakes, the DEQ Director, and the designated Deputy Directors for other participating state departments. In addition, summaries will be provided to outside experts who attend and participate in subject meetings. The meeting agendas and summaries may be posted on the Internet via the DEQ home page or the DEQ Children's Environmental Health Web Page.

### Annual Report to the Director

The TSG Chairperson will annually report the TSG's progress on children's health and other risk assessment issues through the DEQ Deputy Director overseeing the TSG to the DEQ Director. Annual reports will be provided to the DEQ Director by November 1 of each fiscal year or 30 days prior to any statutory reporting deadline. The report will identify what has been accomplished in the previous year, identify new issues and areas of research, and make recommendations to the DEQ Director to protect children's health.

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<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Action</u>
DEQ Deputy Director for AQD, RRD, and WHMD	1. The DEQ Deputy Director will receive and facilitate implementation of TSG findings as appropriate.
DEQ Special Projects Coordinator:	2. The DEQ Special Projects Coordinator will attend TSG meetings as practicable and will apprise the DEQ Deputy Director on implementation of science-related issues of TSG findings as requested by the DEQ Deputy Director.
TSG Members:	3. The DEQ TSG Members will generally attend all TSG meetings.  4. Other state agency TSG Members will attend meetings specifically related to children's health issues and will participate in other meetings and discussions of interest to them and their department's programs or where they possess expertise in the issue under discussion.  5. TSG Members are expected to prepare in advance for meeting discussions and to fulfill assignments as needed.
TSG Chairperson:	6. <sup>4</sup> The TSG Chairperson will be responsible for scheduling meetings, arranging for meeting facilities, providing meeting agendas, and arranging for the preparation of meeting summaries.  7. The TSG Chairperson, with the assistance of the TSG Discussion Facilitator(s), will coordinate the participation of invited outside experts in TSG discussions and meetings.  8. The TSG Chairperson will disseminate background materials to TSG members, invited experts, and other interested parties.  9. The TSG Chairperson will coordinate written documentation of TSG findings.  10. The TSG Chairperson will distribute meeting summaries.

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- Discussion Facilitator(s):
11. The Discussion Facilitator(s) will provide direction for TSG discussions on specific issues.
  12. The Discussion Facilitator(s) will provide background materials to the Chairperson for dissemination to TSG members and invited outside experts.
  13. The Discussion Facilitator(s) will generally author written documentation of the TSG's findings for the issue under consideration.
- Outside Experts:
14. Outside experts will provide presentations, written materials, and expert advice on scientific and technical issues to the TSG.
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Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Steven E. Chester, Director

Date: 12-16-03